

THE OPEN DOOR

PROVIDING QUALITY CARE TO DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED PEOPLE THROUGH COMMUNITY LIVING



Frozen Drama!

Hot Dance!

Song!

Caroline and Michael take down the house in the *Frozen* finale of *Hidden Treasures* Annual Show.

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December 2015

A Bit of Frozen Drama, Hot Dance & Song was the enticing title of this year's *Hidden Treasures* Show. By all accounts it delivered a healthy dose of all three!

Held on June 17 at Fox Lane High School, the event began with an inspiring display by *Hidden Treasures* artists. The talent show followed with performers dancing and singing their way through lively tunes and skits that had the audience dancing in their seats.

Highlights of evening included the Modern Dance group performing Michael Jackson's *Billy Jean*, and The Choral Group singing an array of popular tunes under the direction of Claude Preece. Many, however, thought they saved the best for last. The finale showcased Michael and Caroline in a show stopping act from the movie *Frozen*. The featured song is appropriately titled *Love is an Open Door!*

This year's event drew over 200 ticketholders and brought together staff, administration and consumers from local agencies including Community Living Corp, CLC Foundation, Winslow, WJCS, CBS and Cardinal McClosky Community Services.

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Hula!

To everyone's delight, Danny and Frankie took center stage performing *The Hula Song* from *The Lion King*. The piece was choreographed by Robbin and Suzi.

ABBY (ON THE) ROAD!

If Abby had her way, she would spend most of her time "on the road." Literally. "I love, love to travel," exclaims this spirited woman from Mount Kisco, where she shares an apartment with three roommates. "We have a lot of fun here and the staff is nice," says Abby, who goes on to name them: Patrice, Tim, Marcia, Charmaine... and sometimes others."

To help finance her fondness for globetrotting (more on this later,) Abby works five days a week at Club Fit, helping to maintain the fitness equipment. "I split my time between clubs in Jefferson Valley and Briarcliff Manor," she says, "But I'd like to work at the Briarcliff Manor facility full time. I really like that club, and I get to work out, too!" she says, holding up a toned arm to prove it.

Abby finds time in her schedule for the occasional dinner and a movie with her *besties*, Suzanne M. and Ellen C. They recently saw *Jurassic World* and Abby gave it two thumbs. "I even like it better than the original *Jurassic Park*."



Abby says she would like to become proficient in sign language, and demonstrated a few of the words she has memorized. "I saw a wonderful movie called *Children of a Lesser God*. It inspired me."

When not working or socializing, Abby works on her life goals. At the top of her list is educating people on the disability she lives with. "I have Williams Syndrome," she says. "I went to a seminar in Boston to learn more about it."

According to The Williams Syndrome Association, *Williams syndrome (WS) is a genetic condition that is present at birth and can affect anyone. It is characterized by medical problems, including cardiovascular disease, developmental delays, and learning disabilities. These often occur side by side with striking verbal abilities, highly social personalities and an affinity for music. WS affects 1 in 10,000 people*



Abby is a longtime fan of The Beatles

worldwide – an estimated 20,000 to 30,000 people in the United States. It is known to occur equally in both males and females and in every culture.

Unlike disorders that can make connecting with a person with WS difficult, people with Williams Syndrome tend to be social and very friendly. This last entry certainly characterizes Abby well!

Abby is currently not participating in many outside hobbies since she is saving her money for future vacations. "I want to visit Australia, Greece, China and most of all, Africa."

Why Africa? This brings us to the second item on Abby's list: The Hippopotamus. For a while now, Abby has been studying Hippos. "They fascinate me. I've done a lot of research and have been writing about them," she says. "But I need to see them up close in their natural habitat."

Determined to save enough for an African photo safari, Abby believes dropping an activity or two for a few months will be worthwhile as her vacation fund grows. "It will pay off one day," she says firmly. "And maybe I can go on a safari and collect enough information to write an entire book on Hippos!"

The following is an excerpt from Abby's research. She hopes to publish articles one day and perhaps even write a book on the Hippopotamus .

The African Hippopotamus is the most dangerous animal in Africa! They kill more people than any other animal in Africa.

Hippos usually give birth to one hippo at a time, although twins can occur. They give birth in water and the baby hippos must swim to the surface to catch their first breath of air. The baby rests on the mom's back when water is too deep.

Hippopotamus are very aggressive to other animals and are territorial. They can attack in water or on land and boaters are sometimes killed. Hippos live 40 to 50 years, and the oldest hippo lived to be about 61. Hippo teeth sharpen themselves as they grind together. They say if you see a hippo yawn, get the heck out of the water. They are ready to attack!

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The summer of 2015 has come to its inevitable end, and now we are all getting ready for the challenges of winter. Let's hope we can escape one like last year's. This summer may have been hot and humid, but at least we never had to chop or shovel it! It went by quickly, and we sure packed a lot into it.

One goal accomplished this summer was recording and publishing the life story of one of our consumers. She had asked more than once in the past and we finally got it done through the help of a wonderfully talented summer intern, Campbell Ritchie from Tulane University.

Campbell befriended our consumer and recorded many, many hours of her fascinating and often colorful musings. She collected photos, both old and new, and had the entire story, both painful and funny, bound in a single volume. We held a "book signing" one afternoon here in the offices.



Leatrice at her book signing

Vacation groups went out this summer to all kinds of adventures. Gauging by the number of caps and hoodies sporting the famous Black Dog logo around here, Martha's Vineyard was an obvious favorite.

Another group spent a few nights in London, then travelled to an authentic castle in Ireland where some of our married consumers renewed their vows.

Just last month, two other groups were off to Portsmouth, New Hampshire where another of our married couples renewed their vows on the front lawn, overlooking the ocean. (Thanks to Apple Face-Time and some very patient staff, I was able to attend via the magic of my cell phone.)

More and more of our consumers are participating in the activities offered at the Winslow Therapeutic Riding Center. Jon Lukens and Sue Ferro (Winslow Director) recently entertained members of the local Rotary chapter, serving them omelets made from the eggs produced by our own chickens. I'm told we're collecting almost a dozen eggs a day now and we'll be looking to expand this significantly next spring.

September 14-18 was Direct Service Professional recognition week. The purpose is to recognize and thank the direct care staff for their efforts with your children, siblings and loved ones. Several parents sent in wonderful letters of thanks and acknowledgement, which we shared with the staff.

It's never too late to say thank you, so if you haven't sent in a thank you yet, please do it today. Just a simple card or note has a tremendous impact upon the person receiving it, whether it's the day, afternoon or evening shift. Without their efforts and

willingness to go beyond their job descriptions, we could not do what we do for our consumers. So please, send in a small note of thanks to the folks who do most of the real work for our consumers.



Hart and Jen renew their vows

Finally, I have been approached by several parents about getting together to explain the changes and very real challenges we will face as we transition into a managed care system with an entirely new structure and funding paradigm. Even the manner in which referrals come to us has been revamped.

If you would like to learn more about the specifics of the new system and how we are attempting to deal with its challenges, please drop me an e-mail at this address: jep@communitylivingcorp.org. I look forward to meeting and enlisting your support.

John Porcella

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July 4th Festivities - CLC Style! By Sam Cronk



CLCers love a party, and the July fourth holiday provided a perfect reason for folks from the Peekskill residences to gather for an Independence Day blast. Direct care worker Sam Cronk served as our on-the-scene reporter and sent in this story, along with these great photos. Thanks, Sam!

It was raining on the fourth, so we held an indoor Michael Jackson sing along and dance party. Jenny M. and Tina C. surprised us by dressing up in MJ costumes! Guessing games included that all-time favorite, Telephone!

Party food was fairly traditional, but we loved it all! The sausage and peppers, burgers, hot dogs and fruit salad vanished quickly, and then we were off to the crafts table. By day's end, American flags and red stars were everywhere! We had a great time, and I send special thanks to Gail and Arroya who helped with the planning. (Rain? Who cares about rain?!)

Down on the Farm by Jonathan Lukens

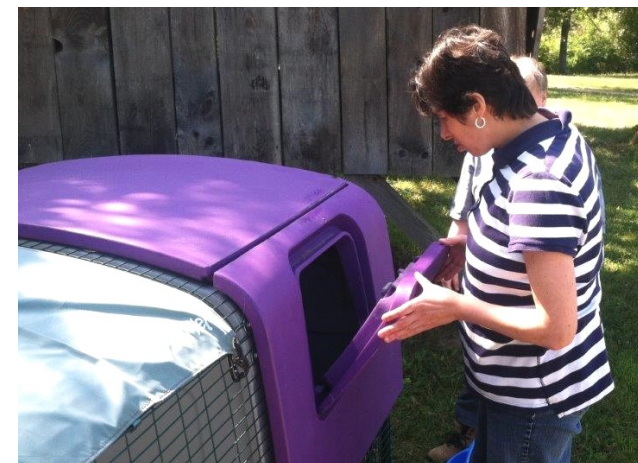
CLC consumers have been busy as the proverbial bees in the garden at Winslow Therapeutic Riding Center in Warwick, NY this past summer. Our Day Hab consumers lovingly tended their plots daily and are seeing the fruits (or should I say vegetables?) of their labor. There's an abundance of cherry tomatoes, green beans, squash, pumpkins and sunflowers. Recently, we've begun composting the chicken guano and table scraps for next year's planting season.

Consumers also look after a brood of chickens, which are laying steadily. They average eight plus eggs per day, give or take a yolk or two. We make lunch using our own veggies and eggs. Any not scrambled are sold for \$3 a dozen.

The crew has recently begun to groom and tack up their own horses and will eventually be able to do so independently. There is absolutely no down time at the farm and the consumers in the program have recognized that participation is a true privilege. We, therefore, expect a higher rate of productivity, which translates into a much better work ethic.



Sorting the eggs to sell. They don't get any fresher than this!



Emily P. checking on her chickens. (Yes, they're laying!)



Eggs, \$3 a dozen!



In July, the garden already looked promising.



User friendly waste disposal ready to load in the composter.



Jenny and Carrie visited Beaver Creek Equestrian Center where they got to clicker train my ex-racehorse and watch a demonstration. They even taught the horse how to smile and fetch a stuffed animal.

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Hidden Treasures Annual Show

➤ Frozen Drama, Hot Dance, Song and an Art Show!



Diane W. displays her beautiful artwork.



Hidden Treasures Singers



Pat M. created this lovely piece in a Hidden Treasures class.



Dancers from Hidden Treasures

Special thanks to Denyele Werthner for her contributions to this article.

A Very Amuse-ing Tale!



What could be better than a mid-summer trip to an amusement park? Not much, according to a group of fun-loving consumers who took the annual trek to one of Westchester County's landmarks — Rye Playland. The excursion was generously sponsored by Westchester County.

Playland features rides, beach and boardwalk, a swimming pool, miniature golf and ice skating. Consumers, however, were mostly interested in the rides!

So what did the CLC gang like best? Danny made a bee-line for the bumper cars, while Noreen favored the relaxing hum and cool breezes offered by the Ferris Wheel. Hartley and Jim scouted out Skee Ball and had a fun and friendly competition. Who won? Nobody remembers!

Of course, everyone loved that enduring favorite, the merry-go-round! The group wrapped up the day with a stop at Nathan's Famous for dinner, and topped it all off with funnel cakes! You can't get better than that!



Top left: Hartley takes on the white stallion. Bottom left: Mousy riding one-handed, rodeo style. Above: Phoebe, Danny, Noreen and Sonia choose to sit it out in the luxury of a winged chariot.

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Shop for a CLC Cause Delivers!

CLC's fifth year participating in *Macy's Shop for a Cause* raised over \$1600 for the agency. Participants buy savings passes for \$5 each and proceeds go to CLC. Pass holders shopped at Macy's on August 29 and, surprise, were granted 30% off, not the expected 25%.

Aloha!...

Infusion Restaurant in Pelham, NY hosted a food and wine tasting event in July for the benefit of *Hidden Treasures*, a music, dance and art program for people with special needs and abilities. Once primarily enjoyed by mostly CLC consumers, the program has expanded in recent years to include consumers from many other Westchester based agencies and individuals.

The evening featured wines and foods from boutique producers around the globe. "It was a perfect evening," said one guest; "perfect wine, perfect food and perfect weather." Thanks go out to all the organizers with specials thanks to Infusion Restaurant for their generous contributions of food and wines, making the event a huge success. See www.htreasures.org for more information on *Hidden Treasures* and how you can help.



HT Arts & Crafts teacher Chavewan Kwanmvang (right) and her WARC colleagues.



HT's director, Lucille McCarthy and Assistant Director, Denyele Werthner,



Guests included Choral Ensemble teacher Claude Preece left, and friends.